

Annual Report of the International Whaling Commission 1998
50th Annual Meeting, 1998

IWC Resolution 1998-9
Resolution on Directed Takes of White Whales

WHEREAS IWC Resolution 1992-3 expressed the Commission's concern that directed takes of white whales might not be sustainable, and invited all states having white whales in their waters to conduct further research on beluga;

WHEREAS at the sixth meeting of the Canada/Greenland Joint Commission on Conservation and Management of Narwhal and Beluga, its Scientific Working Group noted that in view of the uncertainty about the structure and abundance of the West Greenland population of white whales, there are doubts about the sustainability of the current harvest;

CONCERNED in the light of this to encourage a precautionary approach to the exploitation of this Beluga population;

Now THEREFORE the Commission:

INVITES the Greenland Home Rule Authority to

take urgent steps to ensure that the catch of white whales in waters under its jurisdiction does not exceed a sustainable level;

WELCOMES the proposed review of the status of all white whales and narwhals by the Scientific Committee at the 51st Annual meeting ;

ENCOURAGES all states having white whales in their waters:

- to ensure that catch levels are properly monitored;
- to provide relevant scientific data; and
- to send experts to the Scientific Committee at the 51st meeting of the IWC to assist its discussions of stock structure and abundance estimates of white whale populations;

REQUESTS that the Secretariat transmit the text of this Resolution to the Government of Canada.